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Extend Social Security to Non-Profit Agencies

THE Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives is now considering the extension of part of the Social Security System to the employees of the non-profit agencies. One may well wonder what this subject has to do with *Christianity and Crisis*. The justification for our discussing it is our belief that nearly all our subscribers have a keen personal interest in some non-profit agency, be it church, school, hospital or charity.

Social Security in all its forms is an old story in Europe. Our individualistic American philosophy had assumed that security was a problem each person should work out for himself. The tremendous growth of our great corporations has slowly made us realize that most individuals have little to say about their own security, which can best be obtained through mass action, chiefly through Government. The advent of the depression brought an overwhelming demand for some form of Government security which was voted by large majorities in the early years of the New Deal. The Social Security Act of 1935, as amended, contains three major sections:

1. *Old Age and Survivors Benefits*—This provides for a contributory system of pensions for workers who retire at age 65, and benefits for widows and minor children of workers who die sooner. These payments are a matter of right, without a means test.

2. *Unemployment Insurance*—By a rather complicated arrangement of taxes and tax credits this section encourages the States to set up unemployment insurance systems, which they have generally done.

3. *Relief Grants*—These are paid to the States for relief of the indigent aged, the blind and others. It is only the first section which Congress is considering extending at the present time.

The Social Security Act must not be confused with the present proposal before Congress for health insurance. This is a highly controversial and technical issue. It is clear that Congress will do nothing about health insurance for some years, giving the country ample time to debate the issue.

When the first Social Security Act was under consideration, the inclusion of the social agencies was opposed by a small but vocal minority of their own leaders, lay and clerical. Two main objections were raised: (1) The Social Security taxes to be imposed on these agencies would be an entering wedge for State control, and (2) the agencies could not afford the cost. These arguments convinced the great majority of leaders, who were too much concerned with the day to day problems of their institutions to take the time and effort to make a study of Social Security, which is admittedly complex and deals with problems more or less remote. Congress, loathe to oppose the church leaders, left the non-profit agencies out of the system.

The fourteen years that have elapsed since the passage of the act have brought a great change in sentiment. Social Security has become a fixture in our economy. Industry has fully realized its obligation to care for its superannuated and unemployed. The consciences of our institutional leaders have become troubled that their agencies should seem less public spirited than business organizations. Pressures from the employees of the institutions have mounted. Indeed many non-profit agencies have started pension plans themselves and are finding them very costly.

New arguments are now used to meet the old objections as follows:

1. The State has a right and a duty to impose certain controls on all its citizens irrespective of their place in the economy. Fire laws are just as important in a church as in a public auditorium. Compulsory workmen's compensation insurance, applicable to all employers alike, is not open to question. If the institutions demand unreasonable exemptions from controls in their ordinary business dealings they will create an unfavorable attitude toward them on the part of Congress and the general public. This will play into the hands of those who want controls which are really dangerous to the freedom of the institutions.

2. Those who have studied the Social Security Act now realize that, granted the desirability of a

pension plan, the social agencies cannot afford *not* to pay the cost of the Old Age and Survivors Benefits. We cannot discuss here the details of the act but a few figures are necessary to make the point. Originally the Old Age and Survivors Benefits were intended to be self-supporting. The system was set up in the way an insurance company would arrange a plan for a large business corporation. Employer and employee were each expected to pay currently 3% of the payroll (within certain limits) for future pensions. For many reasons, not germane to this discussion, the current contributions have never been increased beyond 1% from each. It is now obvious that a considerable part of Old Age and Survivors Benefits will have to be paid from general taxation which will be imposed on all whether or not they are to receive any benefits. The employees of the non-profit agencies will suffer accordingly.

It is impossible to forecast accurately the overall cost of Old Age and Survivors Benefits. But we can be sure that these same benefits, if purchased from an insurance company would cost at least 5% of the payroll more than the current tax cost of Social Security. In a sense the social agencies and their employees are losing this 5% of payroll. It would be an interesting exercise for executives to figure out how much this 5% would amount to in their agencies. No doubt Social Security taxes will be increased at some future time, but the differential will still be large.

When we come to unemployment insurance the situation is different. So far there is no disposition to have the Government subsidize it. Extension of this section of the act to the social agencies would involve large additions to their budgets. There can be no theoretical argument against their inclusion. An unemployed church sexton is no better off than an unemployed carpenter and probably is in worse financial condition. However, there is a practical argument against it, to the effect that institutions do not "lay off" employees to the same extent as industry. Some compromise plan fair to all should be worked out for the non-profit groups. In any event it is not yet a very live issue.

Most of our citizens are by now convinced that the Old Age and Survivors Benefits should be extended to the employees of the non-profit agencies. Various groups such as the Association of American Colleges have come out for it. Even the Catholic Church has become less vehement in its opposition and would probably go along provided the clergy are excluded. The whole subject has largely been removed from the controversial arena.

Then why hasn't Congress done something about it? It is purely a matter of inertia. Bills have been

introduced in all recent sessions. In the last Congress a bill passed the House by an almost unanimous vote but died in the Senate. It was generally agreed that the matter would have clear sailing in this Congress, but five months have elapsed and the Ways and Means Committee is still holding hearings, and the Senate is yet to consider it. It looks like another stalemate unless the public expresses its views in no uncertain terms. We suggest that our readers make their influence felt.

—Charles T. White.

Communists Seek Ouster Of Bishop Dibelius

The Soviet-controlled Berlin Radio has demanded that Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin be ousted from his position as leader of the Evangelical Church in the Soviet zone of Germany.

The station sharply attacked the Berlin prelate after he had published a pastoral letter denouncing Communist activities in the Soviet zone and had called upon Germans to resist "Nazi" and "Gestapo" tactics allegedly being used in the area.

According to the Berlin Radio, "clerical quarters" had declared that "a man with such an unsteady character as Dr. Dibelius can no longer be a head of the church."

Bishop Dibelius has been under attack by Communist spokesmen for his periodical criticisms of Soviet policies in the Russian-controlled zone.

Lending special significance to the Berlin Radio attack was the fact that just a year ago, Protestant leaders in the capital charged that the Soviet military administration had made an initial attempt to bring about the bishop's ouster from the Berlin See and his replacement by a "puppet" bishop.

The churchmen, whose names were not permitted to be revealed, said the attempt failed when Dr. Franz Krummacker, one of the superintendents of the Berlin-Brandenburg diocese, declined to take over the jurisdiction.

According to church informants at that time, Bishop Dibelius had been persona non grata with the Communists since his return from a visit to the United States in the fall of 1947. During this visit he delivered addresses charging Soviet authorities with hampering church work in Germany.—*Religious News Service*.

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Christian Churches in Communist China

T. C. CHAO

COMMUNIST armies have occupied the whole of North China. The Communist power in North China, at least, is firmly and permanently founded. No other power in China can dislodge it.

Since their conquest, responsible Communists in their conversations, addresses, and proclamations have given assurances that religious freedom is not only recognized, but is definitely guaranteed. There will be freedom to believe and to propagate religion; there will also be freedom to criticize, to ridicule, and to attack it. The Communists themselves have no use for religion, neither Christianity nor any other faith. They openly declare that Christianity is the opiate of the people, founded upon the dreams of the human imagination. The Christian churches are therefore being challenged. Open "conflict of thoughts" have not yet commenced and may not commence in the immediate future. It is bound to come. So far as any acute observer can see, no physical persecution will be enforced although the Christian churches will meet with a considerable amount of irritation.

Christians in China form a very small and frail minority. How far they and their churches can accept the challenge is a question that has to be faced immediately. It is already too late to count the cost. The various denominations have not as yet learned to cooperate with each other; they do not have much to do one with another, each being contented to go on in its own way. Any existing amount of self-criticism there is is very small as compared with the need of it. A united front therefore has yet to be achieved. Within the churches, there is very little real community spirit or fellowship. Years of war have seen the settlement of weariness upon them all. Traditionalism goes along with complacency. It seems that now Christianity, as represented by the churches, has ceased to make any impression upon the society in which it exists. A considerable number of Christian intellectuals and students live outside of the Christian fold. Some of the earnest ones among them, when approached on behalf of their churches, not infrequently surprise one by frank expressions of dissatisfaction or grudge against them. Nearly all of these people think that the church in China must be rebuilt from its very foundation.

Now the challenge has come. The churches, with a poorly equipped ministry which has more worldly wisdom than true self-knowledge and spirituality, are simply unprepared to meet the situation. Dangers and unprecedented opportunities to demonstrate the power of the gospel, both stare in the face of the churches. The very fact of religious freedom promised and guaranteed means a great fighting

chance for creative Christian living and witness bearing. It is terrible to think that the challenge of the revolution is a version of God's judgment upon the churches. The earnest soul who hears the pronouncement of God's judgment has no recourse but reliance upon God's mercy in which judgment always precedes a real renewal. So faith lives in the hope that a miracle will be wrought in the faint beginnings of true repentance and earnest effort.

The churches (O the misery of the plural!) must now do four things. They must have a clear understanding of the ground on which they stand, so as not to make a compromise of the faith. They must in all earnest start a process of internal revitalization to sweep away idol worship, worldliness, hypocrisy, division, ignorance, and heaviness of the eye and lukewarmness of the heart, to create a loving and classless fellowship within the Body of Christ through mutual self-criticism, repentance, and in short a spiritual rebirth, to set their passions on fire for the up-building of a truly social and therefore spiritual community and to know that without such an inward change, outward demonstration in consorted concrete action is impossible. They must quickly plan together and decide upon a program of practical and concrete social service. And they must revolutionize their organization, their theology, their ways of living, and their methods of evangelism. These four things all suggest the need of the prophetic and the creative in their response to God's judgment and demand for a renewal. Not that the situation demands the novel, for history of the Christian Cause throughout the ages is full of lessons. The present requires an understanding of the world's past. What the church did through its saints, apostles, heroes, and martyrs in meeting crisis after crisis should give the lesson and the encouragement. The creeds were all man-made, under various social conditions and against various political backgrounds. So were the organizational side and the different theological developments. Under the present social, economic, political and cultural conditions here in North China, Christians should be courageous enough to dissociate the gospel and their churches from historical accretions, from imperialistic and bourgeois outlooks, from all extraneous elements now mixed up with the essential gospel of Christ, and then to make Christianity the vital thing both within and without the Christian fellowship. In other words Christians in China should become creative in every sense of the word, not to be fearful lest departure is effected from the forms of the mother churches.

It is dangerous to quote the Bible to suit one's own purpose of rationalization. But such state-

ments as "Ye are the light of the world," "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth," and "seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" cannot be disregarded whatever other passage may be employed in the exclusion of passages of an opposite kind to be the basis of a church. Such scriptural verses as mentioned here point to the necessity of a new conception of man, for instance. One frequently hears venerable persons say: "Man can do nothing without the help, the command, and the permission of God. Neither his knowledge, nor his talent and power count anything." One is utterly tired of hearing such pious talks which proceed from the mouth of those who talk with up-turned eyes and do not, having no desire, nor energy to do anything practical and concrete. One is utterly tired because such utterances clearly imply that God gives no help, no command, no permission. For otherwise, the talker would have quoted St. Paul's assertion: "I can do all things in Him that strengthens me."

Man lives in the realm of nature and of social relations, is part and parcel of the material world and of society. He has therefore not only duties toward God, but responsibilities for and obligations to his fellowmen. He has economic, social, political, and international connections the severance from which means sure death to him. And one hardly hears that the hypocrite desires to commit suicide. Somehow insincerity and suicide do not go together, though they are placed in juxtaposition in rationalization. The churches must realize that they have their social duties and must serve under whatever political regime. No one denies that the churches have a social message. The fact is that some people preach it at times; but it does not become actually effective. What a contradiction the churches are. They cannot live as they are in a Communist regime. In order to live they must become their words in concrete social action. Therefore a concrete program of service is a necessity. If the program include street sweeping, do so. If it contains the item of love for the neighbor, go to the neighbor and make him a revolutionist. He cannot be converted to Christ without becoming at the same moment a revolutionary power.

Methods of evangelism must change also. Catering to a reigning political regime and supporting a dictator because he is a baptized member of a church, can no longer be a method any more. It is more dangerous to boast in the glory of the existence of a "Christian general" than to say that the church is willing to sell its soul. Mass conversion and tent meetings are also impossible now. Equally impossible (Yea, eternally impossible) is the employment of paradise and hell to bribe any one into the Kingdom of God or to frighten any one away from the devil. Preaching itself is not only inadequate, but often ridiculous, though it must still be carried

on. The Word must be demonstrated—demonstrated in the changed lives of the converted, in the preacher's own dangerous, selfless living, in the wholehearted fellowship within the Christian community, in the unity of the churches and in their ceasing to be in the plural, and in labors of love under all circumstances and in all seasons. And the growth of collective living and laboring, the individual must be sought out for personal evangelism. First convert the young son or daughter in the family, for that speaks louder than words. In short, the churches must now effect individualization in collective action without which the gospel cannot be shown to be a living message, and to take collective action to insure the worth of the individual. And yet so far, the churches have neither a method of individualization, to distinguish one catechumen from another, nor a way of collective action in evangelism and social service, in which the whole community rejoices.

Just now, not a few of the reverends are at a loss to know how even to carry on the routine. They question: "What are we to preach? What should be the message for today? What can be safely preached, and what is dangerous to say?" They do not know that Christianity has no new message and that the Christian message is always a dangerous thing to impart. But one should not blame them for their sincere uncertainties. The message needs a new dressing-up, and this new dressing-up is in their own Christian living. They need a careful re-education. Therefore it seems that the churches ought to organize classes of instruction and groups for discussion, self-criticism, and new discoveries. Of paramount importance is a spirit of humility and a desire to learn, to change, and to grow.

The challenge of the situation is terrible indeed. But it should be welcomed as God's judgment and an opportunity for a renewal of life. The lesson need be learned to divest the Christian mind of bourgeois habits of complacency, of class consciousness, of the fear of change and revolution. In addition, it should be made to rejoice wholeheartedly in the hoped-for liberation of the people and to offer gladly whatever cooperation there can be to the Communist regime without disobedience to God. Preaching stations that cannot be effectively maintained may be discontinued. Inefficient clergymen may be advised to discover their livelihood in other services than in ecclesiastical activities. The challenge should mean a purge, a purification of the churches, even if such a measure can only be a partial one. The amputation of dead members of the body is surely painful, but rather than be sick unto death, a radical operation is necessary to get a cure. There is hardly reason for the very hesitant and very unhappy to be in places of leadership when the situation is so full of dangers and so pregnant with possibilities for creative achievement.

Yes, church organization, evangelistic methods, theology, and ways of living must undergo a radical change. It is high time for China to begin to have a native theology, with a theory of the creation, a philosophy of history, and an interpretation of human life and Christ's way of redemption. This theology, if forthcoming, need not be a system which in any case is impossible, but should be related to Chinese culture and Marxian dynamic immanentism. It will be a triangular affair. Audacity of thought is necessary. There is no fear of heresy, for history tells us that creative periods have always been times for the emergence of heretics. Origen, perhaps the greatest Christian theologian after St. Paul, was condemned after his death. Nestorius won a name in history for something for which he was not responsible alone. John Huss was burned at the stake. And a trailing cloud of witnesses followed them gloriously. But today there can be no more inquisition, judgment, condemnation, and execution. The fire that burned saints to death for heresy has been thoroughly extinguished. The trouble is that there is so little heresy in the Chinese churches, so little creative thinking, so little originality.

Christianity must be rethought. There is the need of dangerous thinking accompanied by dangerous living, in the spirit of perpetual dissatisfaction and rebellion. For the present, the question may be proposed: "Why should there be the need of dangerous thought?" The answer is precise: "To answer Marxism and to bear the Christian witness to Communists." Communists are human beings like fragile Christians; perhaps they are less close-minded in spite of their fanaticism and passion for materialism. They are still exposed to reasonable interpretations of the Christian faith. They are modifying consciously or unconsciously the sort of Communism they passionately embrace and may even be Marxian heretics. They are groping for appropriate policies for economic development, for political and social structures, for educational methods, and for industrial advancement. On the other hand, are Christians groping for something in organization, in church unity, in evangelistic methods, in creative fellowship, and in theological doctrines to match them? Not to be creative while living in a creative period is the greatest of sins. For some time to come, Communists will be too busy in military operations, in the training of workers, and in conferences of various kinds, to pay much real attention to the churches. Should the churches not take the opportunity thus afforded to show their determination to accept the challenge wholeheartedly to cooperate with the Communist regime where cooperation is possible with all the power that they possess, and thereby to demonstrate the reality of the love that is in the Christ. Communism is man's challenge to Christianity, but it is also God's judgment upon flabby churches. It was a resentment

toward high-sounding idealism that did little to change the course of the world's history since the middle ages. It still is. When it is proved that Christians can accept most of the criticisms and prove them to be unsound and untrue, thoughtful Communists will sit up and take notice.

The opportunity is unprecedented while the churches are too deficient of life to measure up to it. Still the opportunity must not be lost. If Christianity and Communism can live together in China, then they can also live together in the whole wide world. Their togetherness will have salutary effects upon international relations. Just at this moment and for some years to come, Communism is too full of passion and self-confidence to be tackled with. But as everything else in this ever-changing world, the romance will die down and the hard facts of human sin and selfishness along with the human need of a spiritual redemption and the human yearning for God in Christ, will stare in the eyes of the once-upon-a-time enthusiasts. Then the time will come, perhaps not in the too far distant future. Then, not a few of the Communists will knock at the door of the church for admission and for salvation. But it is as sure as the day that the churches as they are now, will not be able to meet their immense needs.

O time! O day! who are those that hear the call of God to have a change of heart, to take courage, and to work together with the Communists for the coming of a new heaven and a new earth? Blessed are they who hear and obey their visions!

Sheep in Wolves' Clothing

ROBERT E. FITCH

I

IN the popular mind those professors who hold important posts in our universities and at the same time confess themselves to be Communists are to be likened to wolves in sheep's clothing. They are conceived to be diabolical agents of world revolution who are masquerading hypocritically in the guise of harmless scholars and research men.

However, to those of us who are close to the scene and who may be personally acquainted with some of the individuals concerned, it would seem better to reverse the metaphor. Our academic friend is not a wolf in sheep's clothing. He is a sheep in wolf's clothing.

The dictionary indicates one meaning of sheep as that of a "weak, bashful, or silly fellow." It is a comedy played by our weak and bashful academician that, though he is fundamentally a sheep, he likes to parade occasionally in the apparel of a wolf. Nor does he think that the fangs and the claws

which he wears for the moment are meant to rend and to devour. These are but the ornaments which grace his innocent gambols with the mere appearance of menace and of power. In this his more intimate friends are not deceived, since they, too, know that beneath the rough exterior there still beats only the heart of a sheep.

It is the present tragedy of the sheep in wolf's clothing, however, that some indiscriminating outsiders are disposed to take him at his face value, or perhaps we should say at his clothing's value. They are inclined to believe that the hide and the hair make the beast. In this unhappy circumstance the sheep is filled with righteous indignation. He knows that his heart is in the right place. He considers all criticism of his appearance either as a violation of personal liberties, or as a curtailment of his professional right to engage in experimental testing of other forms of attire. But his cruder critics take rather a dim view of such speculative caprice. They still believe that beneath the clothing of a wolf there must beat the heart of a wolf.

II

When this curious phenomenon is considered in its wider manifestations, one begins to wonder if our American scholars are now at that point of tolerant indifference to questions of value which made the German universities such an easy prey for Adolf Hitler.

For one thing it is evident that many of our intellectuals think that to be a Communist is pretty much the same thing as to be a pragmatist, or a Thomist, or a neo-realist, or a logical positivist. These are all just so many harmless schools of philosophy, which can live in pleasant fellowship with one another, and whose sole concern, anyway, is nothing more than pure theory.

The fact is that many of our intellectuals are no longer able to grasp the significance of what we call a conviction. A conviction is a firm belief which compels action. They have disposed of all firm beliefs, and they do not mean to be constrained to any sort of significant action. Thanks to the "scientific" analysis and annihilation of all ultimate questions of value, they are prepared to dismiss any proposal of a conviction as an essentially "meaningless proposition."

It is for this same reason that many of them do not care to consider the difference between a theoretical Marxist and a disciplined member of the Communist party. They will not see that theoretical Marxism may be a dynamic program for social justice and a provocative philosophy of history, while practical Communism may be a power for tyranny and for injustice and a device for destroying all meaning in history. In any case they are unable to make the vulgar transition from theory to practice.

It is noteworthy also, when the sheep are gathered together in one flock within their own fold, how affectionately they admonish one another, and with what valor they bleat their defiance against all aliens and trespassers. To be sure, they are all "liberals," these academic fellows, and insist on the rights of free speech and of free expression. Yet being also sheep, they love a certain uniformity in this same "liberalism." Nor will they tolerate it that any one should suggest that the liberty which they champion at the moment is in reality a liberty to put an end to all liberties. Indeed, should one of their own number be so bold as to speak on this wise, then is he threatened with the most terrible penalty of all—to be cut off forever from the company of the true sheep.

It is a finishing touch to this picture that many who defend so staunchly the freedom of teaching of a Communist confrère would be the first to deny appointment on their faculty to a man suspected of being, say, a worthy elder of the Presbyterian church. Karl Marx has intellectual respectability; but not the Christ. And so they are ready to welcome a truth that would make them slaves, but are fearful of the truth that would make free.

III

Those of us who have faith in the fundamental good health of American academic life will be able to believe that the picture painted above is not the whole picture. We shall believe that American scholars and teachers will cast off this corruption as in the past they have discarded others. Nevertheless, it is worth considering what must be the natural consequences of too many sheep that carelessly parade themselves in wolves' clothing.

The first consequence must be that we become tolerant of the appearance of a wolf. Nay, better than this, we shall soon be arguing that in reality there are no wolves; that all of us, to be sure, are really sheep; but that some sheep take a fancy to attiring themselves in a manner that belies their innate gentleness and decency.

The second consequence must be that the real wolves find it easy to enter the flock. Nor will it be necessary for them to dress themselves in sheep's clothing. The only requirement will be that, for the moment, they learn to feign the language of the sheep; that they learn to say to any suspecting sheep, "Why, indeed, should you be deceived by appearances? I, too, am but a sheep at heart. I also am a lover of the flock."

The final day must come when the true wolves turn and devour the true sheep. And the festive occasion will be concluded when the true wolves rend and destroy those silly sheep which thought it but a harmless game and the exercise of a natural liberty for sheep to play at being wolves.

The World Church: News and Notes

Eddy Calls for Christian Action in Asia

Calling upon Asian Christians not to leave the demand for economic justice to the Communists, Dr. Sherwood Eddy, a well known evangelist, says that for the most part, Christians are "blind, deaf and dumb to any need or demand for justice."

Dr. Eddy, who is touring the Far East, reports that "all Asia is in revolution. Nearly everywhere, from India to Indonesia and from China to Ceylon—except where men like Ghandi and Nehru have led the revolution—the revolutionary movement is Communist led, and follows a single pattern set by Moscow."

In his article, "Religion and Politics in India," (*The Guardian*, Madras, April 21, 1949), Dr. Eddy takes particular note of the force of Communism among young people. "We have found Communism appealing to and often penetrating the student body in every college we have visited in India."

Dr. Eddy took particular note of the psychology behind such movements, as seen from the letter sent to an isolated Christian college in Travancore, where a strike was being held, by a Communist leader who had been driven underground. "Capture and paralyze your institution and stop its normal functioning. . . . No leniency towards the bogus of 'religion' of your college, or the slave power of your State. Let no rules, morals and principles of the present society deter us."

"One of the striking things about this letter is that its author has been, at least until recently, known as a Christian. He was convinced that the demand for economic justice, made first by the prophet Amos twenty-seven centuries ago, was fundamental, but that Christians were completely blind to the need for justice and were making no demand for it. He observed that this was even more true of the Hindus and all other religious sects, and that even the Socialists were making no effective demand for justice but left that powerful weapon almost exclusively to the Communists. Accordingly he joined the Communist Party and, when asked in his application questionnaire why he became a Communist, replied, 'because I am a Christian.'

"Many students trod his path and became in time bigoted atheists and violent Communists who repudiated all moral principles. Since they could not serve two masters, they had discarded the moral order and the teaching of Christ and had wholeheartedly embraced the command of Lenin: 'We must be ready for deceit, trickery, lawbreaking, withholding and concealing of truth.'"

"While the mighty weapon of the demand for economic justice is left to the Communists in the revolution that is now sweeping across Asia, I have found the Christians of India and Ceylon, like those of Japan, Korea and China, and for the most part, like Christians of America, sitting quite complacently—blind, deaf and dumb to any need or demand for justice. I believe that the call of the hour is to put our own house in order, to demand and to give justice to all. . . ."

—E. P. S., Geneva.

German Students Back Equal Opportunity for Jews

Students of the Free University of Berlin have unanimously voted "that the Berlin students must create conditions so as to enable any Jewish student, not only to continue and to complete his courses in Berlin, but also to have the possibility after completion of his course of carrying on his profession or career without discrimination or molestation of any kind."

The vote was taken after the students had seen the film "Der Ruf," (The Call), in which the leading role is played by Fritz Kortner, a Jew, who was present in person and participated in the discussions.

The film was shown by Dr. Conrad Hoffman, Jr., director of the International Missionary Council's Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews, who was spending four weeks in Germany.

While in Berlin, Dr. Hoffman also spoke on the Jewish-Christian question to the students and faculty of the Kirchliche Hochschule (Theological Seminary). He held consultations with church leaders throughout Germany and met with those active in the service of missions to the Jews.—E. P. S., Geneva.

700 Youth Aid Reconstruction

Seven hundred young people from North America, Europe and Asia will join forces for reconstruction work in fifteen work-camps in seven countries, including Japan, this summer. The project is sponsored by the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches with the aid of the Congregational Christian Service Committee, the Brethren Service Committee, and a number of churches, and will include one hundred American young people.

At Villach (Austria), campers will help to build permanent buildings for youth gatherings and church conferences in conjunction with the Austrian Ecumenical Youth Council. At Le Chambon (France), young people will be engaged on structural improvements to Le College Cevenol, a liberal secondary school with a Christian atmosphere and an international, interracial student body.

Among the work camps in Germany this summer, such tasks as the following will be performed: two historic castles (Kaltenstein and Ronnenburg), will be made into homes for homeless and refugee youth; barrack homes will be built for young refugee apprentices in Nuremberg; a former munitions dump at Espelkamp into a refugee resettlement training center, organized by the German Evangelical Churches' relief organization (Hilfswerk). Christian community centers are to be established with the aid of such volunteer labor at Berlin and Hamburg.

There will also be three work-camps in Japan, organized for the first time this year, mostly attended by Oriental and American youth.

—The Ecumenical Courier.

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German Evangelical Gathering To Mark Lay Christian Mission

Evangelical Church leaders in Germany have issued a call to a church gathering which aims to stimulate and draw together the whole body of Evangelical lay Christians, and is to be placed on a permanent footing. From this meeting, it is predicted that "a new element of considerable importance will begin to make its influence felt within the Evangelical Church in Germany."

The call to the German Evangelical Church Gathering, to be held in Hanover, July 28 to August 1, was signed by Dr. Dibelius, Bishop of Berlin and president of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, Dr. Lilje, Bishop of Hanover, Dr. Martin Niemoller, Kirchenpräsident, and Dr. Reinhold von Thadden, chairman of the Presiding Committee for the "German Evangelical Weeks."

Commenting on the meaning and responsibility of the new institution, Dr. von Thadden stated that "it is to call upon laymen to take up that active work in build-

ing up parish life to which they are called by Apostolic teaching. This explicitly missionary message from the Church Gathering is to declare that extraordinary exertions need to be made today in order to effectuate the 'lay apostolate' of the Church amid a world estranged from God."

"The main thing," Dr. von Thadden continued, "is that, with the help of the Church Gathering, the lay element of the church will be able to represent its own concern independently. . . . We are not . . . dealing with the continuity of the Evangelical Church, but with the future of Christendom; not with Christians, but with our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, His lordship and His glory."—*E. P. S., Geneva.*

Chinese Christian States Churches Will Survive Test

Determination to carry on Christian work in China was voiced by Rev. George K. T. Wu, general secretary of the National Christian Council in China. "This is not the time for retreat. We must under God's guidance move forward."

Writing from Shanghai, shortly before the fall of the city to the Communists, Mr. Wu declared that "although we cannot be too optimistic about our future, yet we are quite confident that the churches in China will be able to stand the test. We may have smaller numbers of churches, Christians and church institutions, but those who can survive under the new challenges and tests will become much stronger in faith and action."

Speaking on behalf of his fellow-Christians in China, Mr. Wu wrote that he was grateful "that so many of our missionary friends have decided to stay in China." Although relations with the mission boards "may be questioned," Mr. Wu declared that "we are determined to stand for the ecumenicity of the church."

—*E. P. S., New York.*

Scottish Church to Take Over Iona Community

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland voted to form a special committee to draw up a plan for bringing the Iona Community "within the organization and jurisdiction of the church."

The Iona community, founded by Sir George Fielden MacLeod, is a "laboratory of Christian living" where for three months each summer a small group of laymen and ministers join forces to prove the practical value of working and worshipping together. It is located on an island off the west coast of Scotland.

The church body took action after a previous Assembly had decided that Sir George could not fill a ministerial vacancy at Govan Old Church in Glasgow while he held office as leader of the Iona Community. Under church law, no one holding office in an organization not under the church's jurisdiction can fill the post of minister in the Church of Scotland.

In voting to set up the special committee, which will consist of twenty members, the Assembly stipulated it should submit a detailed scheme for absorbing the Iona community into its jurisdiction at the next General Assembly in 1950.—*Religious News Service.*

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